

Message Text

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TAGS: ABLD, ASUP, ASEC, UR

SUBJ: FLOOR LOADING OF CONGEN OFFICE BUILDING

REF: A) DEPARTMENT OM, SEPT 16, 1974

B) STATE 203235

C) LENINGRAD 0735, 0804

1. SINCE MY ARRIVAL ON SEPT 13 TO ASSUME CHARGE, I HAVE REVIEWED BACKGROUND AND PRESENT SITUATION WITH REGARD TO FOURTH FLOOR AREAS OF CONGEN BUILDING. MY CONCLUSIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

2. IT APPEARS THAT HISTORY OF FOURTH FLOOR CONSTRUCTION--PLANNING AND EXECUTION--HAS BEEN MARKED BY FREQUENT MISUNDERSTANDINGS BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND POST. PARTICULARLY, I REFER TO QUESTION OF ALLOWABLE STRESS IN LOAD-BEARING WALLS SUPPORTING FOURTH FLOOR CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPMENT. R. N. BARKMAN, POST TECHNICAL SECURITY OFFICER (TSO) IS SCHEDULED TO DEPART SOON ON REASSIGNMENT AFTER HAVING BEEN CONNECTED WITH PROJECT SINCE ITS BEGINNING. A REVIEW OF POST FILE ON FOURTH FLOOR PROJECT INDICATES THAT TSO BARKMAN WAS CONCERNED QUITE EARLY IN EFFORT ABOUT ADVISABILITY OF PLANNED LOADS ON FORTH FLOOR.

3. MOST RECENT OUTSIDE INVESTIGATION OF BUILDING STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY IS INSPECTION UNDERTAKEN BY FIRM OF SKIDMORE, OWINGS AND MERRILL. MR ERIK B. TRYDE OF THAT FIRM INSPECTED BUILDING ON JUNE 15, 1974. REF A CHARACTERIZES TRYDE'S REPORT AS INDICATING
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THAT "WHILE THERE IS NO DANGER OF FAILURE, THE FLOOR IS HEAVILY

STRESSED..." REF A WENT ON TO ADVISE POST THAT STEEL BEAMS SHOULD BE INSTALLED UNDER FOURTH FLOOR AS A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE TOWARDS BUILDING'S STRUCTURAL SOUNDNESS.

4. MOST IMPORTANT THING IN PRESENT SITUATION IS TO DO THAT WHICH IS REALLY NECESSARY. PAST DIFFERENCES OF OPINION AS TO STRUCTURAL TOLERANCES ARE IMMATERIAL AT THIS POINT. HOISTING AND INSTALLATION OF BEAMS AT THIS JUNCTURE WOULD BE A TREMENDOUS UNDERTAKING REQUIRING DIFFICULT HOIST TO THIRD FLOOR FOR INSERTION THROUGH WINDOW, ETC. MOREOVER, IN VIEW OF SOVIET APPROACH QUESTIONING STRUCTURAL STRENGTH OF BUILDING (TEXT SENT LENINGRAD 0735), SOVIETS OBVIOUSLY HAVE EYE PEELED ON THIS ISSUE. INSTALLATION OF STEEL BEAMS AT THIS POINT WOULD BEAR OUT SOVIET REMONSTRANCES.

5. IT SEEMS TO ME--AS A RESULT OF TRYDE'S REPORT--WE SHOULD COME DOWN ONE WAY OR OTHER ON QUESTION OF FURTHER REINFORCEMENT. SPECIFICALLY, IF THERE IS "NO DANGER OF FAILURE," THEN I BELIEVE WE SHOULD LEAVE THINGS AS THEY ARE. ON OTHER HAND, IF STRESS LOADS DO RPT DO POSE A DANGER OF FAILURE THEN IT WOULD, OF COURSE, BE NECESSARY TO PROCEED WITH REINFORCEMENT EFFORT.

6. IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN A MORE DEFINITIVE TECHNICAL JUDGMENT THAN THAT EXPRESSED BY TRYDE. BUT I AM RELUCTANT TO CONCLUDE THAT WE NEED TO GO THROUGH WITH FURTHER REINFORCEMENT UNLESS IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. THE QUESTION I POSE IS SIMPLE: IS IT ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY? OR JUST "RECOMMENDED" AS IMPROVING WHATEVER SAFETY FACTOR ALREADY EXISTS?

7. PENDING A RESPONSE TO THIS MESSAGE, I PROPOSE TO STAND FAST ON PROCUREMENT OF BEAMS FOR REINFORCEMENT.
NEUBERT

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